Delay in Rail Projects

707. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of major rail projects delayed due to constraints of funds;

(b) whether Government have evolved any mechanism to avoid such delays in future, due to constraint of funds;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Indian Railways have a large shelf of ongoing Railway projects. At present, 278 projects are in progress under the Plan-Heads New Lines, Gauge Conversion, Doubling, Metropolitan Transport Projects and Railway Electrification with an anticipated cost of over Rs. 45,000 Crores. The time over run can be calculated in those cases where the time schedule for completion of the project with matching availability of resources can be planned and assured at the time of taking up of the project. In case of Railway projects, the plan size is determined annually and as such, no estimation of time over run is feasible. Progress of these projects is dependent on availability of funds from year to year.

(b) and (c) Railways have prioritised the projects on the basis of their physical progress, operational importance, national and strategic significance and social desirability. This is expected to assist the Railways in judicious allocation of resources.

(d) Does not arise.

Use of out-dated rail lines

708. SHRI C. P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out-dated and not-supposed-to-be-used rail lines are used by the Railways, as reported in Indian Express dated the 19th October, 2001;

(b) if so, the actual position in this regard; and

(c) whether worthiness of these rail lines is checked before their laying?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (c) The released rails from busy lines are segregated into second hand serviceable rails *i.e.* rails still having balance life and scrap rails. The released serviceable rails are scanned ultrasonically before using them for renewal on lighter traffic routes.

AIR travel by senior railway officers

709. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:
SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that senior officers of the railways/Railway Board are travelling mostly by air on sectors which are easily connected by fast trains;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) how many senior officers have travelled by air during the last six months and the expenditure incurred on the air travel of each of them; and

(d) whether Government propose to issue directives to all the senior Railway Officers, restricting their travel mainly to rail travel and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Economic growth of Railways

710. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to stop the sluggish economic growth of the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;